

REGISTER OF BUILDINGS OF LOCAL INTEREST

Committee: Operational Services Committee

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[X101]

1.0 ISSUE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present an update on the review of the Register of Buildings of Local Interest adopted on 23 February 2017, and to recommend technical changes to the adoption procedure for entries.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are requested to delegate authority to the Planning Manager, in consultation with the Chairman of Operational Services Committee, to adopt additional entries to the East Cambridgeshire Register of Buildings of Local Interest

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Policy ENV13 of the 2015 East Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plan states that the Council will prepare a local register of buildings that make a valuable contribution to the local scene, local distinctiveness and/or local history, but which do not merit inclusion on the national list. These will be given additional protection and their status will be a material consideration, but they will not have the full protection of statutory listing.
- 3.2 The Council adopted a Register of Buildings of Local Interest (a 'local list') covering 89 sites in February 2017. Whilst this has established the principle of local listing and has proved a useful planning tool in as far as it extends, it does not include any mechanism for amendments and it has become evident that a local list which omits 15 out of 35 parishes and contains only 89 entries does not accurately represent the breadth of the district's heritage, and raises questions over consistency and fairness.
- 3.3 The 2017 resolution did however contain a proviso that the local list should be reviewed within three years and fortunately this coincided with an initiative in 2020 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (now DLUHC) to fund a series of pilot projects to trial approaches to local listing (see background documents).
- 3.4 A joint bid for Cambridgeshire involving all the district and county councils was one of the 22 successful projects, and a project officer (hosted by Cambridgeshire County Council) was recruited in 2021 to set up local lists in

those districts (Huntingdonshire, Fenland & South Cambridgeshire) which had not previously started them, to co-ordinate volunteers and to promote the project more generally. A report to DLUHC on the outcomes of the project is included in the background documents.

- 3.5 The project has also funded an internet portal for nominations (<https://local-heritage-list.org.uk/cambridgeshire>), linked to the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record database, which is a user-friendly repository for text, documents and photographs, based on digital mapping. This has made local lists across the county far more accessible, both to viewers and contributors, and has resulted in over 950 candidates being submitted.
- 3.6 The total number of local list entries for East Cambridgeshire now stands at around 580, derived from a variety of sources: surveys by project volunteers, nominations from members of the public and officers, adopted and ongoing Neighbourhood Development Plans and existing documents such as conservation area appraisals.
- 3.7 It should be stressed that these nominations are still subject to further vetting, but nearly all of East Cambridgeshire's 35 parishes have now been surveyed systematically, and the figure is considered a fair reflection of the district's wealth of historic and architectural assets.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The Council is now in a position to move towards adoption of the revised local list and given the number of potential candidates, it is considered that the previous approach of Members adopting them en masse is not feasible. In any case the list is no longer a finite document but a live database, and it makes sense for adoption procedures to be more flexible and responsive.
- 4.2 It is therefore recommended that Members delegate authority to officer level to adopt individual sites, since as the local list is now well-established, this is a technical judgement against selection criteria rather than a matter of principle. This is common practice in other authorities: for example at Cambridge City Council amendments to the local list are authorised by the Director of Planning, with a summary of changes reported annually to Members.
- 4.3 It is envisaged that eligible sites will be adopted in batches (eg on a parish basis) as this dovetails with the assessment procedure, which is limited by the capacity of the county-wide vetting panel. This approach will also be able to react to those sites where immediate threats arise, a flexibility which the current system lacks. The local Parish/Town Council will be able to make representations to the Council.
- 4.4 It is not proposed to alter the procedure of notifying owners, however. There is no obligation for local authorities to do so, and some of the larger pilot projects (eg Buckinghamshire) have decided against this for logistical reasons, but as the precedent here was established under the 2017 local list, there is little

justification for diverging now. It is envisaged that the administrative workload will be absorbed within the planning department's normal day to day operations.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/CARBON IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

5.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required.

5.3 Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) completed. In summary, the CIA concluded as follows:

There will be no direct carbon or other environmental impacts arising, positive or negative, from the implementation of the recommendation.

6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 None

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government statement 23/10/19	The Grange	Christopher Partrick Conservation Officer (01353) 616309 E-mail christopher.partrick@eastcambs.gov.uk
Cambridgeshire Local Heritage List Campaign: Expression of Interest 13/11/20		
Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government press release 2/2/21		
Cambridgeshire Local Heritage List Campaign: Project Closure Report 30/9/22		
Historic England Advice Note 7 Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage		